

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims includes all of the pending claims, and supersedes all prior listings, and versions, of claims in this application.

Claims 1-27 (Cancelled).

28. (Currently Amended) A shift lever mechanism comprising:

a housing;

a lever having a longitudinal axis, said lever being at least partially disposed within said housing;

a pivoting member in operational communication with said lever being adapted to facilitate pivoting of said lever into a plurality of positions; and

a biasing member disposed proximate on said lever coaxially therewith, said biasing member includes a first element and a second element selectively engaging said first element, said first element disposed between said pivoting member and said second element, said second element displaceable in a direction substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis of said lever, a third element axially fixed to said lever relative to said longitudinal axis, and a biasing element disposed intermediate said second element and said third element, said second element disposed between said first element and said biasing element, said lever extends through said first element, said second element, said third element, and said biasing element from the generally coaxial arrangement therewith, said biasing member applying a biasing force to said lever moving said lever into at least one biased position.

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said biasing member is operable to bias said lever into at least one biased neutral position.

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said biasing member is arranged relative to said lever such that said biasing force operates in a generally non-transverse direction relative to said longitudinal axis of said lever.
33. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said biasing member applies a biasing force operable to oppose displacement of said lever in any direction.
34. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said housing includes a longitudinal axis, said biasing member arranged relative to said housing such that said biasing force is applied generally in a direction of said longitudinal axis of said housing.
35. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein in a biased position, said longitudinal axis of said lever is generally parallel to a direction of said biasing force.
36. (Cancelled)
37. (Cancelled)
38. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said biasing element is a spring.
39. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said first element is adapted to engage with a stop means.
40. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 39, wherein said stop means is operable to prevent pivotal displacement of said first element in at least one direction.
41. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 39, wherein said stop means is disposed on an inner wall of said housing.

42. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 41, wherein said stop means includes a region of reduced diameter of said inner wall.
43. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 39, wherein said stop means is disposed on said lever.
44. (Cancelled)
45. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, further comprising a second biasing member, wherein said second biasing member includes a fourth element and a fifth element selectively engaging said fourth element, said fifth element disposed between said pivoting member and said fourth element, said fifth element displaceable in a direction substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis of said lever, a sixth element axially fixed to said lever relative to said longitudinal axis, and said second biasing element disposed intermediate said fifth element and said sixth element, said second biasing member applying a biasing force to said lever moving said lever into at least one biased position.
46. (Cancelled)
47. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 45, wherein said pivoting member is disposed on said lever between said biasing member and said second biasing member.
48. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said pivoting member further comprises a spherical element disposed in a retaining cup, said spherical element slidably engaging said retaining cup.
49. (Cancelled)
50. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 48, wherein said spherical element is fixed to said lever thereby forming a pivot point on said lever.

51. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 48, wherein said spherical element is fixed to said lever by a retaining pin.
52. (Cancelled)
53. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 48, wherein said lever extends through said spherical element to form an arrangement generally coaxial therewith.
54. (Cancelled)
55. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said pivoting member further comprises a plurality of pins adapted to engage with each other to form a pivotable arrangement.
56. (Previously Presented) A shift lever mechanism comprising:
a housing having a housing longitudinal axis;
a retaining cup disposed within said housing;
a lever having a first end, a second end, and a lever longitudinal axis, said lever being at least partially disposed within said housing;
a pivoting member slidably disposed in said retaining cup and being in operational communication with said lever, said pivoting member being adapted to facilitate pivoting of said lever into a plurality of positions; and
a biasing member disposed proximate said lever, said biasing member includes a first element and a second element, said first element disposed between said pivoting member and said second element, said second element displaceable in a direction substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis of said lever, a third element fixed relative to said lever, and a biasing element disposed intermediate said second element and said third element, said second element disposed between said first element and said biasing element, said biasing member applying a biasing force to said lever moving said lever into at least one predetermined position.

57. (Cancelled)
58. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 56, wherein said lever extends through said first element, said second element, said third element, and said biasing element to form a generally coaxial arrangement therewith.
59. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 56, wherein said first element is adapted to engage with a stop member.
60. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 59, wherein said stop member prevents pivotal displacement of said first element in at least one direction.
61. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 59, wherein said stop member is disposed on an inner wall of said housing.
62. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 59, wherein said stop member is in operational communication with said lever.
63. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 56, wherein said pivoting member further comprises a plurality of pins selectively engaging each other to form a pivotable arrangement.
64. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said second and first elements slideably engage said lever.
65. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 69, wherein said second element is displaced axially along a longitudinal length of said lever when said lever is pivoted to at least one of said first and second positions.
66. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 64, wherein said biasing element exerts a biasing force against said first and third elements urging the two elements away from one another.

67. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 69, wherein said second element selectively engages said third element when said lever is pivoted to at least one of said first and second positions.
68. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 56, wherein said second element slideably engages said lever and said biasing member applies a biasing force to said second element urging said second element into contact with said first element.
69. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 28, wherein said lever is pivotable between a first position and a second position, said second element slidably engaging said lever, said second element including a first region engaging said first element when said lever is pivoted to said first position, said first region being disengaged from said first element when said lever is pivoted to said second position.
70. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 69, wherein said second element includes a second region engaging said first element when said lever is pivoted to said second position, said second region being disengaged from said first element when said lever is pivoted to said first position.
71. (Previously Presented) The shift lever mechanism of claim 69, wherein said second element is at least partially disposed around said lever.
72. (Previously Presented) The shift lever of claim 70, wherein said first and second regions of said second member simultaneously engage said first member when said lever is pivoted to a position between said first and second positions.